

**THE CLAIMS**

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Currently Amended) An optical transmitter comprising:
  - a modulation signal source for outputting modulation signals of a predetermined frequency;
  - a semiconductor laser source driven by said modulation signals outputted from said modulation signal source to output laser light modulated according to said modulation signals;
  - an optical amplifier, including an erbium-doped optical fiber, for amplifying the laser light from said semiconductor laser source; ~~wherein~~
  - a modulation depth control system for controlling a ratio of an amplitude modulation depth of amplified laser light outputted from the optical amplifier, to an amplitude modulation depth of the laser light inputted into said optical amplifier, is set in the range of 60% or less;
  - a signal source for outputting signals to be transmitted, in the form of an electric signal;
  - and
  - an external modulator which is provided on a transmission line between said semiconductor laser source and said optical amplifier, which amplitude-modulates the laser light outputted from the semiconductor laser source, based on the electric signals outputted from said signal source, and which outputs the amplitude-modulated laser light as light including signals to said optical amplifier.
3. (Previously Presented) An optical transmitter according to Claim 2, wherein said predetermined frequency is 20 kHz or less.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) An optical communication system comprising:  
the optical transmitter as set forth in Claim 2;  
an optical transmission line through which light signals outputted from said optical transmitter propagates; and  
an optical receiver for receiving said light signals having propagated through said optical transmission line.

6-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) An optical transmitter comprising:  
a modulation signal source for outputting modulation signals of a frequency not more than 20 kHz;  
a semiconductor laser source driven by said modulation signals outputted from said modulation signal source to output laser light modulated according to said modulation signals;  
an optical amplifier, including an erbium-doped optical fiber, for amplifying the laser light from said semiconductor laser source; ~~wherein~~  
a modulation depth control system for controlling a modulation depth of said laser light is 10% or less at an output end of said optical amplifier;  
a signal source for outputting signals to be transmitted, in the form of an electric signal;  
and

an external modulator which is provided on a transmission line between said semiconductor laser source and said optical amplifier, which amplitude-modulates the laser light outputted from the semiconductor laser source, based on the electric signals outputted from said signal source, and which outputs the amplitude-modulated laser light as light including signals to said optical amplifier.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Previously Presented) An optical communication system comprising:  
the optical transmitter as set forth in Claim 12;  
an optical transmission line through which light signals outputted from said optical transmitter propagates; and  
an optical receiver for receiving said light signals having propagated through said optical transmission line.

15-18. (Cancelled)